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Senate

The Senate met at 9:15 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, today, give Your guidance to our lawmakers. Help them to seek first Your kingdom so that everything in time will fall into its proper place and their lives will honor You. As they seek greater intimacy with You, empower them to relate honestly with themselves and with one another. Lead them together to find solutions to the problems that beset this great land. Calm their fears and strengthen their faith. Use them to serve You and country with faithfulness. Let Your peace guard their hearts.

Lord, make us all ever grateful to You for burdens lifted, suffering assuaged, sins forgiven, life renewed, differences reconciled, and hopes restored.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable SHELDON WHITEHOUSE led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 21, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

THANKING THE CHAPLAIN

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, first, we thank the Chaplain for another outstanding prayer. The Chaplain serves this institution very well. We thank him and commend him for that.

SCHEDULE

Mr. CONRAD. This morning, the Senate will immediately resume consideration of the budget resolution. Under the order entered last night, Mr. ENSIGN, the Senator from Nevada, will offer an amendment. Following debate on that amendment, the majority will offer an amendment. Unless we arrive at a different understanding between the managers of the bill, I want to alert all colleagues that no votes will occur before 5 p.m. this evening.

We start today with 42 hours left of the 50 hours on the budget resolution. We want to alert colleagues that unless we are able to find a way to give back time, that means we will have to be in until at least midnight tonight and, perhaps, through the night on Thursday. I don't anticipate that occurring because I anticipate Senator GREGG and I will work out a means to avoid that. But colleagues need to know that because we started the budget resolution later this year than in previous years, because of other legislation, we

are under great pressure if we are going to finish this on Friday. We simply must conclude by Friday.

So we alert colleagues we are going to try to move a series of amendments so our friends on the other side of the aisle have a full opportunity to get their amendments up, offered, and considered, and colleagues on this side of the aisle also get a chance for their amendments.

With that, I thank my colleagues and ask for their cooperation with the managers as we move forward on the budget resolution.

Now we will turn to Senator ENSIGN, who is a valuable member of the Budget Committee. Sometimes we disagree on specifics, but we always welcome his good nature.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 21, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 21) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2008 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2007 and 2009 through 2012.

Pending:

Sessions amendment No. 466, to exclude the extension of tax relief provided in 2001 and 2003 from points of order provided in the resolution and other budget points of order.

Cornyn amendment No. 477, to provide for a budget point of order against legislation that increases income taxes on taxpayers, including hard-working middle-income families, entrepreneurs, and college students.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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